

(received via e-mail)

From: Todd Gilens
To: <smcconnell@waterboards.ca.gov>
Date: 3/2/2009 1:11 PM
Subject: Support for the Rubicon Trail Cleanup and Abatement Order

I am writing to express my support for the draft Cleanup and Abatement Order issued on January 23, 2009 by the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board to the El Dorado County Department of Transportation. I am concerned about the destructive off-road vehicle use resulting in resource damage on the Rubicon Trail. The Board must act to stop erosion, soil compaction, and damage to plants and animals.

If adopted, the order would be a positive first step in assessing damage caused by off-road vehicle use. A move to prevent these impacts is especially important because the lands surrounding the Rubicon include many national forest lands -- lands that belong to the public and make up our national heritage.

I support the adoption of the Order and ask that its adoption be complemented by closure of the Rubicon Trail until such time as a full environmental review can be conducted and appropriate measures are taken to minimize impacts from future motorized use of the trail, if such use must occur. Wet season use of these fragile areas is particularly damaging and contributes heavily to the sediment discharge .

Self-policing and volunteer efforts have proven largely ineffective in preventing environmental damage and illegal behavior.

I commend the Regional Board and staff for your excellent assessment of the impacts on the Rubicon from off-road vehicle use and initiating the process needed to stop this damage from continuing. I also applaud you for taking action and ask that the draft Cleanup and Abatement Order be formally adopted.

Todd Gilens